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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
of Minorities
Fiftieth session
Item 12 (e) (i) of the provisional agenda

REVIEW OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN FIELDS WITH WHICH THE SUB-COMMISSION HAS BEEN OR MAY BE CONCERNED

OTHER NEW DEVELOPMENTS

ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES OF THE TRANSFER OF ARMS AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN ARMS ON THE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Letter dated 21 July 1998 from the permanent representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva, addressed to the secretariat of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

I have the honour to transmit herewith information on illegal arms supplies from the Russian Federation to the Republic of Armenia in 1993-1996.

I would be grateful if you could circulate the present letter and the above-mentioned information as an official document of the fiftieth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities under item 12 (e) (i) of the provisional agenda.

(Signed): Sima EIVAZOVA

Permanent Representative of
the Republic of Azerbaijan
to the United Nations Office
at Geneva

Annex

Information on illegal supplies of arms and equipment from Russia to Armenia between 1993 and 1996

1. At the beginning of 1997, certain Russian officials revealed and widely publicized details of secret illegal supplies of substantial quantities of arms, equipment and munitions to Armenia from the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation. These facts were confirmed by the Russian Ministry of Defence and the Russian Principal Military Procurator.

2. On 2 April 1997 the Chairman of the State Duma's Defence Committee, L.Y. Rokhlin, presented to the Duma a report containing considerable information and testimony concerning supplies of Russian arms and equipment worth a billion dollars to Armenia. The Duma adopted a special decision on this subject.

3. This issue has been examined in international organizations and forums. Supplies of Russian arms to Armenia have prompted a negative reaction among international political circles, and were dealt with in particular in a report to the United States Congress by the Administration on 15 May 1998 concerning implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

4. President H.A. Aliyev of Azerbaijan has raised this matter with Russian President B.N. Yeltsin. President Yeltsin instructed the Procurator-General of the Russian Federation to conduct an investigation. Agreement was also reached on the establishment of a tripartite committee to clarify the circumstances surrounding this matter.

5. The Principal Military Procurator of the Russian Federation has initiated criminal proceedings relating to the illegal supplies of arms and equipment to Armenia.

6. The lack of progress in the Committee, stemming from the frankly destructive stance of the Armenian side and lack of will on the part of certain forces in Russia to assist in revealing the facts relating to the violation of international obligations and Russian domestic legislation on arms deliveries, has given rise to serious concern.

7. The types and quantities of the arms, equipment and munitions that have been transferred, the delivery schedules and routes, the suppliers and recipients, are all known.

8. These supplies cannot be ascribed to the process of dividing up the stocks belonging to the Seventh Guards Army of the former USSR, which was stationed in Armenia, because that process was completed by 1992. The arms were delivered from various Russian regions, and also from elements of Russian armed forces deployed in other States.

9. It should be pointed out that the arms supplies have substantially enhanced the fighting capacity of the Armenian forces, which have carried out warlike actions and occupied Azerbaijani territory. Available data on the types and quantities of the arms that have been transferred and schedules for

the transfers give every reason for concluding that these supplies played a major role in the growth of attacks by Armenian forces and their seizure of Azerbaijani territory.

10. The deliveries even continued under the ceasefire which was secured with such difficulty. It must be pointed out that the arms transferred were arms of an offensive nature which can be used in a new spiral of aggression by Armenia against Azerbaijan. There is incontrovertible evidence that the transferred arms and equipment are being deployed in occupied Azerbaijani territory.

11. All this, taken against the background of a hardening Armenian position in the negotiating process, points to the fact that Armenia, drawing on support from outside, has no intention of settling the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict by peaceful political means or liberating the Azerbaijani territory it has occupied, but is endeavouring to consolidate its hold on Azerbaijani territories and preparing for further confrontation with Azerbaijan.

12. Such arms supplies to a belligerent violate the principles and standards of international law and the obligations arising from a number of international treaties and agreements, specifically the CFE Treaty, as well as decisions taken by international organizations. These actions cast a shadow over the friendly and good-neighbourly relations between the Russian Federation and Azerbaijan and run directly counter to the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Security concluded at the highest level between the two States in July 1997. The arms supplies to Armenia also run counter to the Russian Federation's obligations as a permanent member of the Security Council and a co-Chairman of the CSCE Minsk Conference.

13. These actions carry with them a real threat that the process of peaceful settlement will be undermined and that the Armenian-Azerbaijani armed conflict will escalate, and they seriously impair prospects for the establishment of peace, stability and security in our region.